Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

of the star is visible, although, on some of them, stars as faint as the 14th magnitude are clearly seen. The exposures of these plates varied from 10 to 242 minutes. On nine plates, the first taken on April 8th, and the last on July 1, 1895, the star appears, and its photographic brightness diminishes during that time from the 8th to the 11th magnitude. This star precedes A. G. C. 15260 (photometric magnitude 5.47) $0^m.5$, and is $1'.7$ north. Its approximate position for 1900 is, therefore, in R. A. $11^h\ 3^m.9$ Dec. $-61° 24'$. Two stars of the 11th magnitude are near the *Nova*. One is nearly north, 110″ distant; the other is 80″ south preceding.

EDWARD C. PICKERING.

October 30, 1895.

(Harvard College Observatory Circular No. 1.)

COMET *c* 1895 (PERRINE).

This comet was discovered on November 17th, at 5:30 A.M., in the constellation *Virgo*. Twilight was fast brightening, so that only pointings could be made, from which an approximate discovery position of $\alpha\ 13^h\ 44^m$, $\delta + 1° 40'$ was announced.

The comet at discovery was a bright object, having a well-defined nucleus, which was estimated at 7th magnitude, and a tail probably 10′ long. Positions were obtained for the first three mornings after discovery, from which Professor CAMPBELL computed a parabolic orbit, the elements of which are as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} T &= \text{Dec. } 18.4063 \\ \omega &= 273° \ 01' \\ \Omega &= 320 \quad 49 \\ i &= 141 \quad 25 \\ q &= 0.1914 \end{aligned}$$

The residuals for the middle place being,

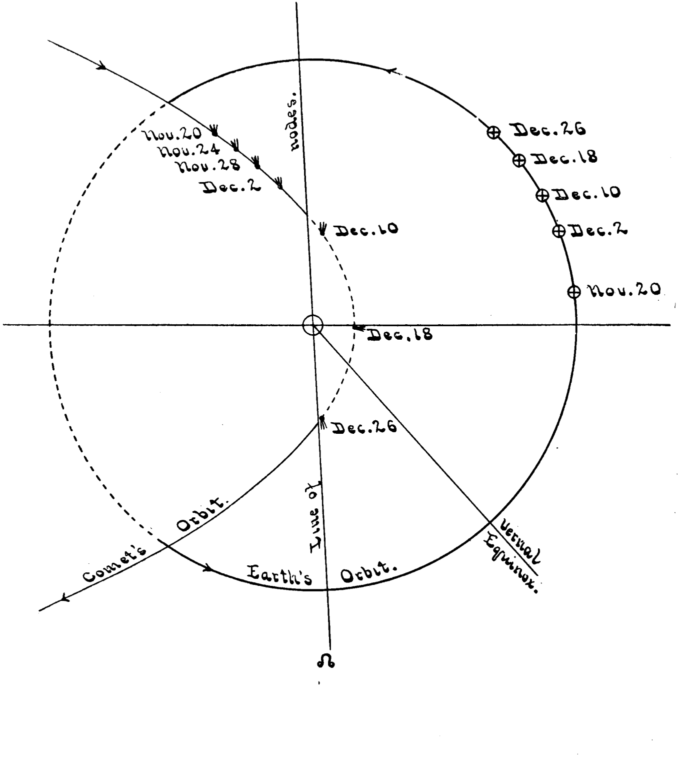
$$\text{Observed} - \text{Comp.} \begin{cases} \cos \beta' . \Delta \lambda' = & -0'.02 \\ \Delta \beta' = & -0\ .04 \end{cases}$$

From these preliminary elements an ephemeris was constructed, as follows:

November 20.5	$\alpha\ 13^h\ 52^m\ 14^s$	$\delta\ -\ 0°\ \ 7'.7$
24.5	14 2 52	− 2 36 .3
28.5	14 16 27	− 5 43 .1
December 2.5	14 34 52	− 9 45 .7
10.5	15 45	− 22
18.5	18 15	− 31
26.5	19 10	− 23

Gr. m. t.

Orbit of Comet c 1895. (Perrine.)



A comparison of recent observations shows that the comet is following this ephemeris very closely. However, a new orbit will be computed shortly from observations separated by longer intervals of time, and from which a more accurate and extended ephemeris will be constructed. The accompanying diagram represents an orthographic projection of the comet's orbit on the plane of the ecliptic, and shows the positions of the comet in its orbit at different dates, and the corresponding places of the Earth in its orbit.

An inspection of the diagram shows how much more favorably the comet will be situated before its perihelion passage on December 18th than after. The Earth and comet approach each other until about December 13th, when they begin to separate.

The position of the comet's orbit is such that, about December 16th, it becomes an evening object; but, on account of its great southern declination, it will be badly located for observation. It will not recede far from the Sun, and about January 11th will again become a morning object. It will then be separated from us for some time by about the diameter of the Earth's orbit, and will be fainter than before perihelion. The comet has grown rapidly in brightness since discovery, and became visible to the naked eye on November 26th.

Mr. COLTON has secured photographs at every available opportunity. These show an increase in length of tail from about one degree on November 18th to five degrees on November 26th. Besides the main tail, there is a shorter one to the north, making an angle of about thirty degrees with the former. This short tail is the brighter of the two.

Professor CAMPBELL has examined the spectrum both visually and photographically, and finds the usual type; i. e., a faint continuous spectrum due to *reflected* light, and bright bands and lines showing the presence of incandescent carbon and nitrogen.

C. D. PERRINE.

LICK OBSERVATORY, December 1, 1895.

NEW ELEMENTS OF COMET *c* 1895 (PERRINE).

The following elements of Comet *c* 1895 are based upon Mr. PERRINE'S observations, made November 17th, 24th, and December 1st.

$$T = \text{G. m. t., } 1895 \text{ Dec. } 18.32570$$

$$\left.\begin{array}{l} \omega = 272^\circ\ 35'\ 38''.0 \\ \Omega = 320\ \ \ 26\ \ \ 19\ .1 \\ i = 141\ \ \ 39\ \ \ 22\ .6 \end{array}\right\} 1895.0$$

$$q = 0.192253$$

$$\text{O} - \text{C:}\ \cos\beta'\,\Delta\lambda' = -\,1''.9;\ \Delta\beta' = -\,2''.1$$

W. W. C.

A MEDIEVAL GUESS AT THE ORIGIN OF THINGS.

Professor HENRY G. HANKS, of San Francisco, sends the following extract:

> "In very deed (that I may expound the matter in a few words) I found all things that are generated in the bowels of the mountains to be infused from the superior stars, and take their beginning from them in the form of an *aqueous cloud*, fume, or vapor, which for a very long time fed and nourished by the stars, is at length educated to a tangible form by the elements. Moreover, this vapor is dried, that the wateriness may lose its dominion and the fire next by the help of the air retain the ruling power. Of water-fire and of fire and air, earth is composed."

This paragraph is taken from "BASIL VALENTINE, his Triumphal Chariot of Antimony, with annotations by THEODORE KIRKRINGIUS," London, 1678, (page 145), which is a translation from the original work, *Currus Triumphalis Antimonii* (XV. century).

THE NEW OBSERVATORY OF HEIDELBERG.

A private letter from Professor MAX WOLF notifies that considerable progress has been made in the buildings of the new Heidelberg observatory. The institution is built on the summit of the *Konigstuhl*, 570 metres above sea-level, and 460 metres above the flat land near the river. The buildings are of stone; the dwelling-house is already under cover; the astrophysical laboratory is nearly finished; the tower for the astrophysical observatory (Professor WOLF) and the astronomical observatory (Professor VALENTINER) are about half-finished (November, 1895).

E. S. H.